

A Boy Scout Necessity:

The Ten Essentials

1. **Rain Gear**- weather can change swiftly in the mountains. Wet skin and clothing, combined with falling temperatures and wind, can speed the onset of a life-threatening condition called hypothermia. Protecting the core temperature of the body's torso and head are the most critical.
2. **Whistle**- three short blasts is the universal distress call. This is the best way to attract help when lost or stranded (a shout doesn't carry nearly as far and you will not be able to continue shouting for long periods of time as you will grow hoarse).
3. **Water Bottle**- take a full quart of water at a minimum. On a hot day, or if there is not a ready water source, take two or more.
4. **First Aid Kit**- it can take hours, perhaps days, to get back to civilization and professional medical attention. Immediate treatment of even minor problems (i.e. blisters, cuts, or burns) can prevent serious conditions from developing.
5. **Flashlight**- use to find your way or signal for help. Be sure batteries and bulb are fresh, and carry extras of each.
6. **Emergency Blanket**- as temperatures drop, your body quickly loses heat (especially from the head). Made of super lightweight heat-reflective Mylar (CK), a blanket can help you ride out the cold until help comes. In excessively hot conditions, an emergency blanket can be used to provide shade.
7. **Matches / Match Container**- starting a contained campfire may be necessary in the face of life-threatening cold and/or wet weather. Bring long wood-stem "strike anywhere" matches and/or "waterproof" matches (they give you extra time to ignite kindling), and keep them dry, in a waterproof container.
8. **Extra Food**- a high-calorie/high-nutrient snack can refuel a body and brain. Protein bars and/or CLIF bars are often recommended for hikers and campers. At a minimum, carry hard, clear candy.
9. & 10. **Map and Compass**- to know your way or find alternate routes in the case of an emergency. Know how to use both.